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TAGS: [EWWT](#) [MARR](#) [PGOV](#) [PHSA](#) [PHUM](#) [PREL](#) [SO](#) [GR](#)
SUBJECT: GREEK VIEWS ON PIRACY CONTACT GROUP PARTICIPATION

REF: STATE 85758

CLASSIFIED BY: Deborah A. McCarthy, Deputy Chief of Mission; REASON:
1.4(B), (D)

¶1. (C) MFA Counselor Dimitrios Papandreou commended U.S. efforts to resolve the impasse over participation in the Contact Group for Piracy Off the Coast of Somalia, agreed with excluding North Korea and Iran from participation, and labeled our reftel message "a nice compromise." He noted his understanding that Japan, as Chair of the upcoming plenary, had already invited Cyprus to participate, and while interested in how the new concept of "participation" would work in practice, was not worried about any negative impact to the efficacy of the CGPCS.

¶2. (C) Papandreou stated that he would be accompanied at the upcoming CGPCS plenary in New York by the Deputy Commander of the Greek frigate "Psara," which served as the flagship of the EU's Operation Atalanta from December 2008 to April 2009. He shared his personal view that the Chinese may again raise what he termed their unhelpful proposal to create separate areas of responsibility, and thought that the Deputy Commander might be able to provide some pushback against the Chinese drawing on his operational experiences. Papandreou noted he was interested in hearing the latest from the U.S. and Egyptian leads of Working Groups Three and Four, respectively, and welcomed any potential bilateral contacts with our delegation.

¶3. (C) Papandreou cited several times the excellent cooperation between Greece and the U.S. on piracy, noting in particular our common stance against an International Piracy Tribunal favored by other European Allies. When asked about prospects for trying piracy suspects in domestic courts, including Greece when appropriate, he pointed to ongoing discussions in Copenhagen of CGPCS Working Group Two on legal issues, and offered to sit down and exchange notes in the future.

¶4. (C) Commen: Given Greece's important role in international shipping, and positive views toward working with the United States, we believe that a high-level visit from Washington this fall can bring dividends to our cooperation with Greece on piracy issues, through reinforcing our cooperation, speaking directly to Greek shippers, and pushing the Greek government to take a more proactive approach on prosecution. The annual "AMVER Safety Awards" -- U.S. Coast Guard safety awards with a Greek program coordinated locally by the influential International Propeller Club of the United States in Greece (www.propellerclub.gr) -- will take place in the October/November 2009 timeframe (dates TBC). This is a major

event, in which the illuminati of the Greek shipping world participate, and which is traditionally attended by the U.S. Ambassador or other high-level Embassy or U.S. Coast Guard officials. It offers an ideal venue for a policy speech by PM Assistant Secretary Shapiro, around which a substantive program with Greek government and military officials, plus commercial interests could be built.

SPECKHARD